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HFS Urges Medicaid Customers to Update Their Addresses Before the End of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Agency to Partner with Hundreds of Local Organizations Over Summer to Reach Medicaid Customers

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) is launching a summer campaign urging people who use Medicaid to update their addresses to avoid losing their health insurance at the end of the federal COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE).

The PHE is currently set to expire in October, at which time Medicaid customers will have to renew their coverage for the first time since the pandemic started. HFS will send renewal paperwork to the address on file, which means Medicaid customers who have moved in the past three years without updating their information may not receive it.

HFS' outreach campaign will include connecting with hundreds of local organizations that serve Medicaid customers in order to leverage their expertise and networks in the communities they serve across Illinois. Medicaid customers move more frequently on average than other Americans, making it vital that groups on the ground get involved in helping Medicaid customers provide up-to-date addresses. These organizations will use HFS' [messaging toolkit](#) – which is available on the [HFS website](#) in multiple languages to spread the word.

Medicaid customers can update their addresses by either:

- Calling the HFS hotline: 877-805-5312, or,
- By visiting <http://www2.illinois.gov/hfs/address> to complete an address change web form.

The federal government enacted the continuous coverage provision as part of the federal public health emergency, and as a result of that, Medicaid customers have not been asked to update their contact information since March 2020 or earlier. When the PHE ends, HFS will send redetermination materials to each household during the month when they would have been up for renewal if not for the continuous coverage provision during the PHE.

In preparation for the end of the PHE, HFS is committed to protecting coverage for as many customers as possible, and to do so in a way that fulfills all legal requirements, meets federally mandated timeframes and reduces inequities in health coverage.

The federal government may or may not extend the PHE beyond October. If it does, Medicaid customers may continue to receive coverage without renewing their insurance plans or updating their addresses.

HFS is joined in this campaign by other state agencies to try to reach as many people who use Medicaid as possible. The Department on Aging is working with the state's 13 regional Area Agencies on Aging and hundreds of local service providers to share the address update messaging. The Department of Veterans' Affairs is partnering with the American Legion and VFWs, as well as its Veteran Service Offices and Veterans Homes to spread the word in their communities.

The Illinois State Board of Education has distributed the messaging toolkit to school districts across the state, because districts can use Medicaid data to determine eligibility for free and reduced meals. In addition, the Department of Public Health is collaborating with local health department communication teams and the COVID Ambassador Network, and the Department of Human Services has shared the toolkit with its Division Directors to inform relevant populations that it is time to update their Medicaid address with the state.

Advocacy organizations, nonprofits, and local governments and municipalities are all encouraged to download the state's messaging toolkit to help people keep their health insurance through Medicaid.

The key messages in the toolkit are:

- Medicaid customers! Don't risk losing your health insurance. Update your address with Illinois Medicaid.
- Illinois Medicaid needs to send you paperwork. To keep your health insurance, use an address where mail can always reach you.
- Updating your address is easy, fast, and free. Call 877-805-5312 between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. or visit www2.illinois.gov/hfs/address. If you use a TTY, call 1-877-204-1012.

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